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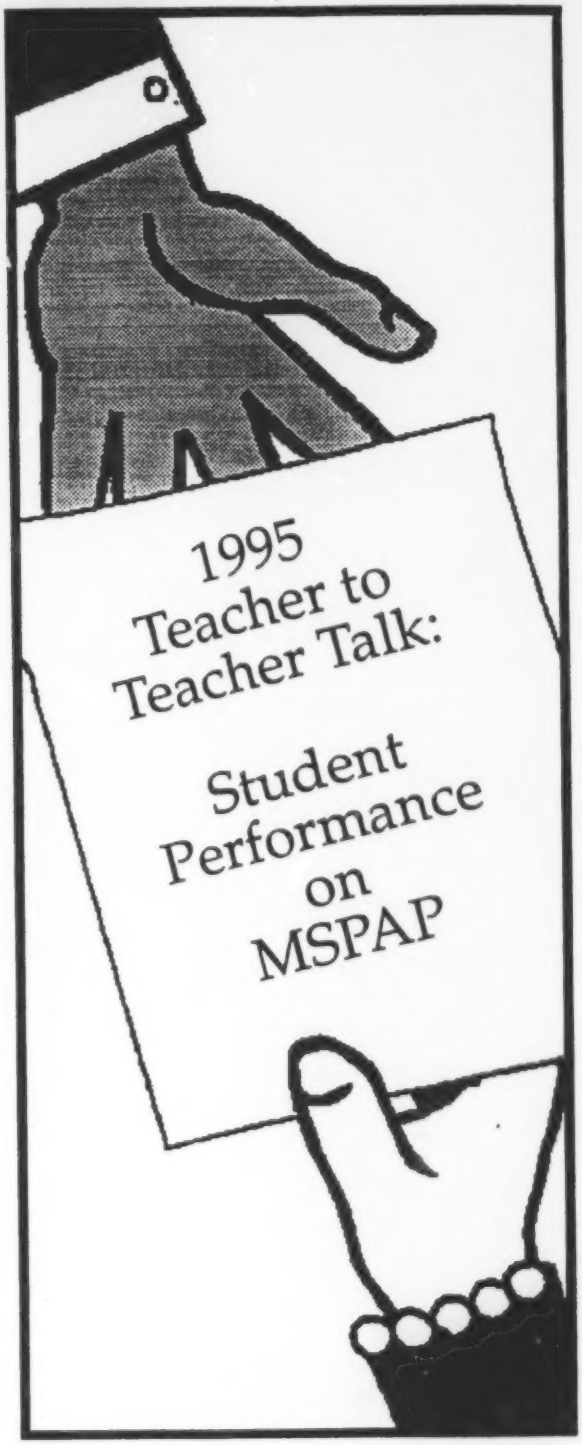
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ABSTRACT

This document concerns what teachers learned from students responses to the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) tests in 1995. Teacher responses and comments are presented in the following categories: (1) "Look How Far We've Come!" (identifies areas of improvement in student performance); (2) "Perceptions" (students test-taking behaviors; skills, processes, and abilities; and integrative thinking and learning in Reading, Writing/Language in Use, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies); and (3) "Actions" (recommended actions in the specific subject areas noted above. Teachers who participated in previous years scoring projects were especially aware of the most recent evidence of improvement and of the positive impact on student learning when teachers implement performance-based instruction based on the Maryland Learning Outcomes. (MAH)

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1995 Teacher to Teacher Talk: Student Performance on MSPAP

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND THE
DIVISION OF PLANNING, RESULTS, AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

MARYLAND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Once again, this past summer, several hundred teachers took the opportunity to share what they'd learned from their experience scoring student responses to the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) tests. Specifically, they responded to the following questions:

1. On the basis of your experience scoring MSPAP, what are a few impressions that you would most like to share with other teachers about student performance?
2. Based on those impressions, what do you anticipate doing (or doing differently) in your classroom or school?

The *1995 Teacher to Teacher Talk* is a distillation of the most salient, most often repeated observations and recommendations from your colleagues around the state. Feedback has been organized into "Perceptions" (responses to Question #1) and "Actions" (responses to Question #2). This year's edition also contains a section called "Look How Far We've Come," which continues the process begun last year of identifying areas of improvement in student performance. Teachers who were veterans of previous years' scoring projects were particularly attuned this year to evidence of improvement. They urged that we share these highlights to make clear that there is positive impact on student learning when teachers implement performance-based instruction based on the Maryland Learning Outcomes. Sometimes, improvement can be masked by empirical data, since many students are not yet meeting the rigorous standards that are embodied in MSPAP. Yet the teachers who scored the tests observed that more students than ever are closing in on proficiency.

Although comments within these pages are organized by grade level and content area, many comments cross content areas, so you may find it useful to read *1995 Teacher to Teacher Talk* in its entirety. You will note that each entry is followed by a grade level designated in parentheses. This identifies the grade level of the MSPAP responses that the teacher who provided that comment was scoring. However, the vast majority of comments are relevant to teachers across grade levels. The designation of NG means that the teacher failed to indicate the grade level team on which he or she served.

It is important to remember that the feedback in *1995 Teacher to Teacher Talk* reflects what teachers themselves chose to share with others. Not all of the Maryland Learning Outcomes are addressed in their observations, and some outcomes appear more heavily weighted than others. Similarly, many observations address fairly basic skills rather than more complex thinking. There is much more to MSPAP, therefore, and to the goals we are attempting to reach by the year 2000, than is represented here. Nevertheless, along with other sources of information available to you from local and state sources, we hope that *1995 Teacher to Teacher Talk* is a useful tool to improve teaching and learning in Maryland.

Gail Lynn Goldberg
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Office of Planning, Results, and Information Management

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LOOK HOW FAR WE'VE COME!

- *This is the second summer that I've scored the MSPAP and it seems to me the Maryland's third graders are reading and writing more. I bubbled far fewer blank books this summer. (NG)*
- *I'm impressed by the fact that the majority of the children are on task with no drawing or doodling in books and few off the wall answers. The teachers administering the tests should be given a lot of credit for this. (NG)*
- *Students are improving overall — in the 3 years I have scored these are the best scores I have given yet. (Grade 3)*
- *Having scored for 5 years, I have seen improvement — most children truly put forth an effort and seem to comprehend what they have read. (Grade 3)*
- *Students are writing more then they have in the past. While many as yet are not showing quantitative (scorable) differences, there have been qualitative improvements. (Grade 3)*
- *I have been very impressed by the vocabulary — a lot of descriptive words have been used. (Grade 3)*
- *Children seem to be using strategies well such as FAT P (form, audience, topic, purpose) to develop paragraphs. (Grade 3)*
- *Many students were doing a good job of answering in complete sentences. (Grade 3)*
- *Fewer blank books were seen this year for third grade. I think this is remarkable compared to when I graded third grade books two years ago! (Grade 3)*
- *The ability to compare/contrast seemed to be a strength overall. (Grade 3)*
- *Many of the students appear to have the ability to freely express themselves through their writing. (Grade 3)*
- *More students are trying to add details and develop their ideas. (Grade 3)*
- *Many more students are using key words from the question to begin their answers and are thus more effective in addressing the question completely. (Grade 3)*
- *Children are taking risks spelling unfamiliar words and using more sophisticated punctuation. (Grade 3)*
- *Students generally add one and two digit numbers very well. (Grade 3)*
- *Students seemed to be very creative when asked to draw/design something. (Grade 3)*
- *Students are using webs and tally charts better than in prior years. (Grade 3)*

- *Students did well on reading a pictograph and bar graph. The students also did well on finding a pattern. (Grade 3)*
- *Students can generally complete tables and use tables to gather information. (Grade 3)*
- *Students seemed to be better prepared to answer map (locating) questions. (Grade 3)*
- *Students are doing well on responses that require recall. (Grade 5)*
- *Students could comprehend and summarize a story selection. (Grade 5)*
- *Many students have gained a better understanding of what performance based assessment is and have begun to improve by working through all the activities. (Grade 5)*
- *Children seem much more comfortable with the test — less frustrated. (Grade 5)*
- *Students could identify a problem in a story and suggest a solution. (Grade 5)*
- *Students performed well with graphic organizers (ex. Story chart, comparison/contrast chart). (Grade 5)*
- *Students have greatly improved in their use of the KWL (what you know, still want to learn, have learned) chart. (Grade 5)*
- *The kids really love the hands-on activities when they can actually do them themselves with a partner. These activities make a big impression on the students and most of them really remember these activities and can explain them fairly well in subsequent responses. (Grade 5)*
- *I found that many students had good ideas and imaginative solutions to problems. (Grade 5)*
- *Students are understanding probability. (Grade 5)*
- *Although we still have a ways to go, written expression and language usage seem to have improved greatly over the three years I have scored MSPAP. (Grade 5)*
- *Students seem to be willing to try all activities - there are fewer answers left blank. They seem to be taking a genuine interest in trying to do well while completing the tasks. (Grade 8)*
- *They are reading and comprehending primary resources. (Grade 8)*
- *Students seem to have a good grasp of writing complete sentences that incorporate the questions asked. (Grade 8)*
- *Expressive writing is improving — some superb creative pieces. (Grade 8)*
- *Most students write topic sentences well. Many can expand on the topic that was selected. (Grade 8)*

- *Students were able to use transitions well. (Grade 8)*
- *I see improvement in summarizing expositional material. (Grade 8)*
- *Most students can use graphic organizers. (Grade 8)*
- *Students are doing a good job finding the mean and subtracting decimals. (Grade 8)*

PERCEPTIONS

General

Note: The following comments are not discipline-specific, even though they were based on teachers' experiences scoring tasks in particular content areas. Some comments relate to students test-taking behaviors, some relate to skills, processes, and abilities that go across disciplines, and others reflect integrative thinking and learning.

- *Directions for MSPAP tasks are quite detailed and often contain critical information needed for solving problems. Students need practice working with this kind of material. (NG)*
- *Students need more work in understanding and using higher order thinking skills, including comparison and contrast and analogies. (NG)*
- *I've noticed that more underlining of key words in questions by students usually results in a better response. (NG)*
- *Some students still give up when confused. (NG)*
- *Students really need to remember units of measurement on answers! (NG)*
- *Students need to work on making a line or bar graph with key elements: title, appropriate intervals, axes, labels. (NG)*
- *Students (as well we all know!) need to read information in tasks carefully. Many miss key points through carelessness. (NG)*
- *Most students found it difficult to take information from a sample population and determine relative values for the entire population. (NG)*
- *Students like hands-on activities but often find it difficult to shift to text-based activities afterwards. They keep referring to the experiential task. (NG)*
- *Children should be encouraged not to copy word for word from the text. (NG)*
- *Though the students had knowledge of the material, they still had difficulty sometimes expressing themselves in writing. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to use process learning in all content areas. Predicting and adjusting that prediction is used in reading, math, science, geography, etc. Most children did not understand the value of this type or style of education. The students need exposure and the teachers, too, if they are not familiar with this. (Grade 3)*
- *Students should be trained to use knowledge gained to build up to a concluding activity such as a letter written to other students after they have researched a topic. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to learn to read questions, understand what they are being asked, and consider the audience in order to address a question. Students need to be able to explain answers and use their own ideas (not copy information verbatim). (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Teach students that understanding the question is crucial to responding properly. For example, students should be aware if they are to explain or not, give examples and how many, use the text, use their own ideas, make an observation, connect it to real life occurrences, etc. Careful consideration should be given to every word in a question! (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students generally seem to express themselves better when responding to a story or unusual circumstance than when relating straightforward facts. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Many students are still in need of improvement in expressive writing (rather than simply paraphrasing information from the resource booklets) critical thinking skills, and, most importantly, following directions. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students have trouble determining what it is exactly they must do after reading very long prompts; highlighting has helped a few students. They must be trained to recognize needed information and disregard extra non-essential information. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students don't seem to know how to take information and put it into their own words. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Stress to students that predictions and estimates do not have to be 100% correct, but just feasible; also, they need to be able to justify their answers. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to understand the difference between "and" and "or." And means <u>both;</u> or means <u>one</u>. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students' explanations should be clear — too much use of words like it (e.g., counted it up, thought it in my head, etc.) I thought I knew what the child meant but I had to assume <u>too</u> much. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students do need to work on <u>time</u> <u>management</u>. Some students spent too much time on tasks and did not finish. Their answers for the questions they did do often were good-excellent. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students are having problems with paraphrasing directions to perform a task. We need to continue working on explanatory writing. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to understand patterns. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Kids need to learn how to write to inform and to persuade. Children should understand how to include information from what they have read as well as from their imaginations when writing. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Many students had some difficulty in using information from the reading to back up their responses. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Most students did respond to quantity cues in the question (e.g., giving 3 ways to find a state or more than one reason when asked to do so). They did have trouble integrating the response when a question asked for reading and social studies information or reading and science information. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students must make efforts to move away from words like "nice," "good," and "big." They are not descriptive enough. If they are used, students must expand to add more details. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Help students understand predictions — what they think will/might happen. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to work on comparisons. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to make sure they answer each part of a question. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students seem to have difficulty explaining how they figured out a problem. Many responses state "I used my brain," or "I just knew it." Students need more practice explaining their thought processes. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students can describe or tell what items look like and compare quite well; however they have a harder time explaining reasons for their choices or backing up their decisions. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Many children make unnecessary spelling mistakes by misspelling words that are in the directions. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Responses to explain why need to include specific details and extension/development of ideas. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *If students are to gather information from factual sources they need to practice PARAPHRASING. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Many third graders had a difficult time with the activities that required the use of symbolism. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to be able to answer a multi-step question, and the answer should be thorough. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Some students would write just to fill up the paper — this doesn't lead to better scores, however. The answer to the question of how much to write is enough to develop your ideas clearly and well. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *In written responses, I saw many examples of students who organized their thoughts before writing. Paragraphs were well done and there were fewer examples of students who wrote on and on and said nothing than in previous years. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *I have noticed that most students are having a difficult time using written language to express themselves in science and math. The majority of written responses are very general and vague. Students offer little or no evidence to support or justify their answers. (Grade 5)*

- *Students need to work on time management (things do not need to look cute). (Grade 5)*
- *Many students seem to start writing immediately. They don't even take a minute first to organize their thoughts. (Grade 5)*
- *Teachers need to emphasize the use of examples from text to support answers. (Grade 5)*
- *Students generally are not responding thoroughly to multi-step instructions written in paragraph form. Even students who highlight or underline lack thoroughness. Many students respond to questions as though they were presented in isolation. They do not seem to be following the flow of the tasks. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need to understand the term data. (Grade 5)*
- *Teachers who do not administer the tests need to buy into the idea that this is not just a test for the 3rd and 5th graders. The skills really should be taught in all the grades so that when the students reach grades 3 & 5 they are more familiar with the test formats and they have a better skills background. (Grade 5)*
- *Teach students the difference between factors and multiples. (Grade 5)*
- *I feel everyone needs to instruct about graphic aids — (webbing, sequence charts, Venn diagram). Some students need to be taught these skills and how they help organize information. I strongly feel teachers need to discuss scoring tools with their class and let them help set scoring (0-1-2) requirements. (Grade 5)*
- *Students still need practice in finding information that is relevant in text material. Students still need practice supporting their answers with text information. They still rely on generalities when specifics are needed. (Grade 5)*
- *Discuss measurement tools and how they are used. (Grade 5)*
- *Students are writing more, but because they haven't read the entire question, their answers are often only minimal or not enough for a point. (Grade 5)*
- *Students should avoid copying information from the resource book. (Grade 5)*
- *Many students show a good grasp of material but are unable to communicate well enough and are not aware of the need for thoroughness. (Grade 5)*
- *Many students seem to have trouble with the concept of time. (Grade 5)*
- *Instruction must be planned for every lesson to meet multiple outcomes in an interdisciplinary fashion. (i.e. graphing, social studies data, reading in content areas, writing across curriculum, etc.) (Grade 5)*
- *Whether answering orally or in writing students need to be able to explain their choice/ answer and give evidence to support the statements. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *When teaching the making of graphs: 1) make sure they label the x and y axes, 2) make sure they give each graph a title, 3) make sure they label their graphs with equal increments. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Please help your students understand that reading and interpreting questions is of the utmost importance. I have read lots of responses which state information accurately, yet don't address the question. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *In all content areas, students should be able to explain the effects of _____ on _____. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Teachers should use terminology consistent with terms used for testing in their everyday directions. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Teachers need to provide more practice constructing graphs, including plotting information, labeling axes and titling the graph. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Have children do multi-step activities. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students routinely fail to support their answers with materials from the text. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students must also pay closer attention to the information given in the resource books. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Group activities must be taken seriously, as this information is so important to the task. Students must look at answers and ask themselves if the answers seem reasonable. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students must be better aware of the outcomes so they know what is expected of them. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need practice reading informational articles from magazines or newspapers. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students generally seemed to have problems with the abstractions presented in many of the questions (i.e. Why is this information important?). (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Many students are very poor spellers — even with words that were presented in the text and which were readily available for reference. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students are not writing specific answers. Just writing "it was interesting" or "the story has a lot of action in it" without an explanation nets the student a zero. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to back up their opinions with facts. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Although many students write plenty of information they don't answer the question that was asked. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *To develop the habit of explaining ideas thoroughly, students need to pretend that the scorer knows nothing about the topic. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Many students still do not know what a graphic organizer is or how it is to be used. (Grade 8)*

- ❑ *Students should practice identifying key words and analyzing both sides of an issue. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *When called upon to express an opinion about adult matters, students put greater thought into their answers. Many eighth graders appear to see beyond their age and the immediacy of their daily lives. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need more exposure to methods of persuasion, in response to persuasive prompts. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need more practice in peer response. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need more direct instruction of organization in writing. Students tended to ramble, without responding directly to the prompt. In addition, students were easily distracted and wrote about things which were off topic. Kids cannot spell! (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach organization skills directly and more in depth. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Give students more independent practice of writing in response to prompts. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I couldn't help but notice in the hundreds of papers that I graded that the students had a difficult time with certain vocabulary words and this, in effect, cut them off from the possibility of adequately answering the questions. They should be encouraged to use the dictionaries available to them during the test. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *When the questions ask for details — be sure to give more than one. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need to work on pacing themselves and working within a time limit. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *In a lot of cases, students seem to have the knowledge, but don't know how to communicate it well. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Focus on the question being asked — it may or may not relate to a previous question. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Please remind students not to begin a thought with it without making clear the antecedent to which it refers. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students do a good job of including topic sentences to focus their answers. Students need to check their answers to determine if they really respond to the questions being asked. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students omit the specifics that indicate real understanding. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *When students had read several articles and were then told to compare two specific ones, many chose the two most recently read rather than the correct ones. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Many students had a difficult time following directions — their answers indicated they either did not read the directions and/or did not understand them. (Grade 8)*

READING

- ❑ *Students are apparently competent in recalling information (giving exact information based on a text). However, there seems to be a need to work on making connections between the reader's own ideas and ideas based on the author's text. Students usually give either their own ideas or a text-based idea. Rarely, do they incorporate both into their responses. (NG)*

- ❑ *Many students confuse the word characteristics with characters. They will identify people rather than characteristics. (NG)*

- ❑ *Students are beginning to write more appropriate responses; however they need to have more experience in using text-based information to validate their responses. (NG)*

- ❑ *Students seemed to have trouble when asked to incorporate their own thoughts along with information about something they read. (NG)*

- ❑ *Instruction should focus on the expansion of ideas. Sometimes students had the right idea but only got a score of "1" because there was no supporting detail. (NG)*

- ❑ *Kids seem to have a good grasp of character traits, being able to choose a character, a trait that describes him or her and using support to prove it. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need help making predictions using information from the title and the pictures in the story. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Instruction needs to emphasize: 1) topic, main idea, and detail; 2) problem/solution tasks; using supporting detail from text to back up an answer. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to know the meaning of the word illustration. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to be able to tell why specific pictures help a reader understand text. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students have difficulty answering inferential questions. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need to also work on answering reading comprehension with specific text references for interpretive level questions. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students should be able to look back at a story and underline/circle clues which led them to inferences. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Students need modeling and practice in paraphrasing information and integrating their own ideas or extensions with text information. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Please help your students understand that reading and interpreting questions is of the utmost important. I have read lots of responses which state information accurately, yet do not address the question. (Grade 5)*

- *On the reading tasks, students often have difficulty using text to support their answers. (Grade 5)*
- *Students also need to work on getting used to using several references to support their answers. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need to work on making interpretations after reading text. (Grade 5)*
- *The reading was better — the children were able to complete most tasks in the reading section, except that they had difficulty using support from the story. (Grade 5)*
- *Students are not writing specific answers. Just writing it was interesting or the story has a lot of action in it without an explanation nets the student a zero. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need to learn to cite information from the text to support ideas. (Grade 8)*
- *Many students are also not reading carefully when using the resource book. They often miss some obvious facts related to the task at hand. (Grade 8)*
- *Students have a difficult time reading for understanding. Many students could not answer questions based on the text they read. (Grade 8)*

WRITING/LANGUAGE IN USE

- ❑ *Many students are attempting high level vocabulary, and sentence structure seems more varied this year; however, punctuation is still a weak spot. (NG)*
- ❑ *Many students had problems spelling very simple words (i.e. should, would, could, are, our, because, etc.). (NG)*
- ❑ *Use more transitional words. (NG)*
- ❑ *Teachers should teach their students the writing process. (NG)*
- ❑ *Often paragraphs were unorganized and very short (i.e. 1 or 2 sentences). (NG)*
- ❑ *Students should use sentences of different lengths and types to make writing more effective. (NG)*
- ❑ *Need more emphasis on pupils answering questions and expressing themselves in written language — less emphasis on ditto sheets, completion exercises, etc (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *The children probably would improve their writing to inform if they were given more opportunities to practice this type of writing and more importantly to think about their thinking first, (Metacognition) before putting their thoughts on paper. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Teachers need to allow children to engage in more writing. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need continued direction and encouragement in proofreading/editing what they have written! Many careless errors result in lower scores than necessary. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Too many students use only simple sentences instead of varying sentence form and using compound and complex sentences. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students are not using capital letters and end marks appropriately. In addition, students are not taking risks in their language choices. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students are having difficulty with homonyms and knowing the difference and when it is appropriate to use which one (e.g. our-are, to-too, right-write, know-no) (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *The children seem to enjoy writing for personal expression. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to be able to create or develop a story using all of the necessary components of a story. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to be familiar with the LU icon as a signal to write complete sentences and check their spelling. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students have difficulty writing a cohesive paragraph. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Often students are not aware of what literary form they are using (poem, story, play) (Grade 3)*

- *Many students will write an entire paragraph of 7-8 lines without a single mark of punctuation. (Grade 3)*
- *The proofreading process should be modeled and practiced. (Grade 3)*
- *With expository writing, children are trouble formulating and organizing ideas. They do not seem to be able to put themselves in the place of the reader. (Grade 3)*
- *Many children write to persuade without success. This needs to be reviewed in class. (Grade 3)*
- *Students also need to be reminded about the over-use of the conjunction "and ," to use capital letters at the beginning of a sentence, to capitalize proper names, and to use the correct punctuation. (Grade 3)*
- *I have seen improvement from last year in students' general use of capitalization and punctuation. Areas where many students are not demonstrating proficiency are subject/verb agreement and use of correct verb tense. (Grade 3)*
- *The students are having a lot of difficulty devising an effective organizational plan for their writing. For example, their texts lack topic sentences, transitions, punctuation, and closure. (Grade 3)*
- *When writing to persuade, state your opinion or position and use facts to support. (Grade 3)*
- *Many students seem to have a real interest in poetry while writing for personal expression. It appears as though many of them are writing their ideas as they go along, however, and not giving the real thought needed to develop a solid piece of poetry. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to know the difference between informing and persuading an audience and must work on both. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to use more details/descriptive words in their writing, especially in explaining things. (Grade 3)*
- *In written responses, I saw many examples of students who organized their thoughts before writing. Paragraphs were well done and there were fewer examples of students who wrote on and on and said nothing. (Grade 3)*
- *When students use FAT P they seem to be much more organized. (Grade 5)*
- *Although students often showed fearlessness in using a more challenging vocabulary, they often made mistakes at the most common level. The most common mistakes included using a singular noun in place of a plural one, as well as using a singular verb with a plural noun. (Grade 5)*
- *Teachers need to review the following language skills: use of quotation marks, use of punctuation, subject/verb agreement, pronouns, and adjectives. (Grade 5)*

- *Teachers need to review the following writing skills: persuasive writing, writing to inform, poetic devices, and poetic writing, dramatic devices and dramatic writing. (Grade 5)*
- *Work on homophones like are, our, there, their, hear here, your, you're. (Grade 5)*
- *While some methods emphasize writing to write, students must learn to answer questions with requested data and to do so correctly. Students are capable of writing simple, compound and complex sentences correctly. Teachers need to insist they do so. (Grade 5)*
- *Discourage starting sentences with "because" or "so" since students rarely compose a complete sentence when doing so. (Grade 5)*
- *When students had to write letters to a friend they often became chatty and went off task. (Grade 5)*
- *Writing — the children need to work lots more on editing and revising/rewriting. (Grade 5)*
- *Give children many examples of explanatory writing to read, analyze, and score using a rubric. Special attention should be given to the use of detailed and specific information and varied sentence structure (compound and complex versus simple). (Grade 5)*
- *Students tend to be careless, so proofreading skills should be emphasized throughout the year. (Grade 8)*
- *Students need to be taught to elaborate written responses. (Grade 8)*
- *Students have difficulty with grammar and spelling. Some excellent stories were marked down for LU because of a large number of errors. Students need to be taught the rules, and those rules must be reinforced. (Grade 8)*
- *Use dictionaries, even to look up words in directions. (Grade 8)*
- *Students must work more on organizing persuasive paragraphs. (Grade 8)*
- *Students need to know how to peer edit effectively, not just use teacher terms. (Grade 8)*
- *Most students write topic sentences well. Many can expand on the topic that was selected. (Grade 8)*
- *Children should be taught how to use quotation marks if they are lifting material from a source. (Grade 8)*
- *Students need to do more persuasive writing and must learn to support opinions with textual information. More scientific interpretation. (Grade 8)*
- *Here are some areas that need to be dealt with: summarizing (not plagiarizing); sentence and paragraph formation — capitalization, punctuation, indentation; finding and supporting ideas from readings; reading fiction vs. non-fiction, etc. (Grade 8)*

MATHEMATICS

- ❑ *Students have trouble comprehending some of the verbal problems in mathematics, especially if the problems ask them to do two things. Most of them could use their compass and protractor very well. (NG)*
- ❑ *Stress using titles on graphs and charts. (NG)*
- ❑ *Stress proper labeling of graphs. (NG)*
- ❑ *Many students didn't seem to know the numerical equivalents of ¶. (NG)*
- ❑ *Students need to know how to construct angles of given size using a protractor. (NG)*
- ❑ *Students are often asked to read tables and use the data given to construct other tables, graphs, or calculations. (NG)*
- ❑ *Solving word problems with 2 to 3 steps is an area of weakness. (NG)*
- ❑ *Teach labeling measurements. (NG)*
- ❑ *Students are still having difficulty explaining patterns. They are doing well with creation and extension of patterns, though. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Stress to students that predictions and estimates do not have to be 100% correct, they just need to be able to justify their answers. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *More practice in explaining how data are used to arrive at an answer is necessary. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Help students understand predictions — what you think will/might happen. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to write a number sentence if that is part of the directions, not just the answer. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Many students have difficulty demonstrating a complete (same size <u>AND</u> same shape) understanding of congruency. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Review and reinforcement of writing number sentences is absolutely necessary. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Emphasize that math is not just numbers. Students need to be able to explain how and why they have the answers they do. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to learn the difference between a number sentence and a word problem. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Need to spend more time on the geometry unit and make sure they can apply the information. (Grade 3)*

- *Students were not always sure of the appropriate operation to use in a problem solving situation. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to learn to solve problems with area and perimeter and to label their answers correctly. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to learn the characteristics of plain and solid geometric shapes. (Grade 3)*
- *Students need practice with everyday problems, especially problems involving division. (Grade 3)*
- *Students had difficulty writing explanations for math problems (Grade 3)*
- *Students need to use mathematical terms to explain a math concept. (Grade 3)*
- *Math terminology is often misunderstood (product, number sentence, etc.) (Grade 3)*
- *I was pleased to see that most children were able to write succinctly about how they arrived at their results. (Grade 3)*
- *Practice identifying a fact based on information from a graph. (Grade 3)*
- *Students understand math concepts such as symmetry. (Grade 3)*
- *Children did not respond well to math related vocabulary questions. (Grade 5)*
- *Teachers and students need to practice more on explaining answers to math problems in paragraph form. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need to understand the term data. (Grade 5)*
- *The students seemed to enjoy doing the hands on type of activities but they had difficulty interpreting and reporting the results so that someone else could understand what they meant. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need more practice in explaining math answers using precise information (numbers) and labels. Many assumed the reader would accept the answer without the logical explanation. (Grade 5)*
- *Students generally did poorly on exercises that involved using a chart and completing math computations, based on the chart. (Grade 5)*
- *Students continued to confuse congruence and symmetry. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need practice reading decimal numbers on calculators. (Grade 5)*
- *Most students have difficulty in following a written formula in math. (Grade 5)*
- *Teach students the difference between factors and multiples. (Grade 5)*

- *Students need to be able to read a formula in words and transform it into a numerical formula or a chart, then use it to solve a problem. (Grade 5)*
- *Students should only round when directions indicate. (Grade 5)*
- *Discuss measurement tools and how they are used. (Grade 5)*
- *Students should use correct units of measure. (Grade 5)*
- *Students were able to construct a circle when given a radius. (Grade 5)*
- *Students who say they used mental math will not get any points. (Grade 5)*
- *Make sure that all answers in the math section are given and include appropriate units of measure. (Grade 5)*
- *Continue to emphasize the construction of graphs. (Grade 5)*
- *When students are asked to explain an answer, make sure they explain in detail and give examples if possible to further their explanation. (Grade 5)*
- *Write paragraphs explaining comparisons when given charts, graphs, tables, etc., and how they are alike and different. (Grade 5)*
- *When students use a calculator, make sure they realize the meaning of a decimal answer. (Grade 5)*
- *Many students set up the graph well but lost many points due to lack of labeling or attention to details. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need to work on accurately setting up a graph. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need practice rounding numbers correctly. (Grade 5)*
- *Allow students to plan activities where money is involved. (Grade 5)*
- *The students seem to experience difficulty with using the protractor. (Grade 5)*
- *Students need more practice constructing graphs — plotting information, labeling axis and titling the graph. (Grade 5)*
- *Some students continue to experience difficulty with mean and median. (Grade 5)*
- *Many students add the dimensions instead of multiplying them when they are asked to determine the area of something. (Grade 5)*
- *Students are having quite a bit of difficulty solving simple algebraic equations. (Grade 5)*
- *Graphs are getting better; however x and y axes are still not being labeled and titles are not being given. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *Use the answer book or scrap paper to calculate an answer in math. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to check over math work to see if all of their answers make sense as a complete activity rather than individual sub-activities. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *If the activity requires certain measurements of shapes, students should know that those measurements will be checked in test scoring. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *The children need practice using mathematical terms to explain how they arrive at an answer. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to learn to write mathematical terms in a sentence. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students should check all work for accuracy. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students tend not to give units of measurements in answers. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Provide many experiences for students to use proportions and construct circle graphs. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students should have more practice in graphing and interpreting data. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Plotting points seemed to be less of a problem. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students lack familiarity with setting up trials. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Combinations that list the specifics of all possible outcomes always seem to be incomplete. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Give all graphs a title and properly label a graph (e.g., vertical, horizontal axes). (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Do not skip math instruction on probability. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Math explanations are getting more detailed and complete — but often stop short of what's needed. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students performed better than I expected on probability activities. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need practice using calculators. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students seem to know conceptually what area and perimeters are, although they do tend to mix them up a lot. Students at the 8th grade level apparently need more exposure to circumference and area of circles as well as to some other important geometric concepts, such as the Pythagorean Theorem for triangles. It also appears that many students do not have a clear understanding of simple probability, let alone what dependent versus independent events are. I believe that these are all the things that need to be reemphasized. (Grade 8)*

SCIENCE

- ❑ *Stress using titles on graphs and charts. (NG)*
- ❑ *The concepts of living/non-living is introduced in first grade, but apparently it needs to be reviewed each year. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Stress to students that predictions and estimates do not have to be 100% correct, they just need to be able to justify their answers. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to experience more hands-on science. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Conclusions in science experiments (model, model, model!) require students to use data and facts for support. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *The students seemed to enjoy doing the hands-on type of activities but they had difficulty interpreting and reporting the results so that someone else could understand what they meant. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to improve skills in using information, an example; many students could list the general characteristics of something they observed, yet could not use this information to identify something else which shared those same characteristics. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students answers in science are to general and/or vague. Relate answers to the science experiment. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students must put the correct units of measure. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Children must label and put titles on graphs. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to give support for predictions. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Most students are doing very poorly on the geology activities on the test. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Please stress how students should record observations. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need to label drawings. (Grade 8)*

Social Studies

- ❑ *Students are not giving much in the way of background information on which they've based their opinions. (NG)*
- ❑ *Students are unable to distinguish between country, continent, state, city, etc. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students were unsure of what a map element was (compass rose, title, key) when asked to add one to a map. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students had difficulty identifying features of different environments. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *More practice in explaining how data is used to arrive at an answer is necessary. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students had a lot of trouble identifying an appropriate symbol for a country and then explaining it using accurate information. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students generally know the difference between natural, capital and human resources. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students are generally able to identify goods and services, but many are unable to adequately define their choices. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Students need to back up their opinions with facts. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Teach the difference between goods and services. Students also need to know and be able to give examples of human, capital, and natural resources. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students have difficulty with content vocabulary such as characteristics, current issues, consequences, economic, interdependency, supply and demand, culture, social, economic. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need to know and be able to give examples of human, capital, and natural resources. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students were weak with economic vocabulary including: 1) government goods and services, 2); budget analysis (i.e. U.S. Budget); 3) dollar value, — inflation; 4) cost of living, and; 5) resources. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need practice reading informational articles from magazines or newspapers. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Student vocabulary skills are weak. They do not know the meaning of words such as exclude, economics, supply, demand, markets, interdependency, consequences. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need to support their answers with information from their reading. They should be well-practiced in this skill before the test. They should also be able to recall and relate all areas of curriculum (what is learned in science relates to what is discussed in social studies). Current events, constitutional rights, major themes, trends in American History need to be re-enforced before the test. (Grade 8)*

- *Students need to be aware of our tax system — read newspapers, discuss issues, parent discussions. (Grade 8)*
- *Working with maps — locating regions on a map, background in climatic conditions needed — students do not know latitude and longitude or how to use direction. (Grade 8)*
- *Teachers need to teach the following concepts: Supply and demand; economic consequences. (Grade 8)*
- *Economics continues to be a weak area. (Grade 8)*

ACTIONS

General

- ❑ *If I were still teaching I would allot more class time to assigning and assessing recorded observations. This test asks the student to explain — pictures, readings, answers, changes, investigation, causes, choices. For an emerging reader with limited writing skills it's not easy. Lots of experience should stand him/her in good stead for life. (NG)*

- ❑ *More emphasis on completing assigned tasks and questions. (NG)*

- ❑ *Reading and taking apart assignments so students will know what is being asked versus what the response should be. (NG)*

- ❑ *I intend to give the students more practice in making and using charts and writing about what the charts pertain to. I intend to add more writing activities into my math program. (NG)*

- ❑ *I will help my students proofread their own writing for mechanics as well as content. (NG)*

- ❑ *Teach children not to see predictions as right or wrong. (NG)*

- ❑ *Read all instructions to the end. (NG)*

- ❑ *If things are the same, unlike, etc. encourage children to continue answers by asking why, how, etc. (NG)*

- ❑ *Teach comparing and describing differences. (NG)*

- ❑ *Teach how to glean answers from information. (NG)*

- ❑ *I hope to give my students background material in the subject matters. Also there will be numerous chances to do hands on work. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *I plan on teaching students how to answer a multi-step question. Also I want to teach students how to focus and read every word in a question/statement. Students need to be taught that they are reading for a purpose not just to call words but for a purpose! (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *I plan to give students stories with connections to the different content areas to read. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Teach students that the understanding of a question is crucial in properly responding. For example, students should be aware if they are to explain, give examples and how many, use the test, use their own ideas, make an observation, connect it to real life occurrences, etc. Careful consideration should be given to every word in a question! (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Teaching kids to highlight what needs to be done and what is expected from the question. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *I plan to focus students' attention in:*
  1) *fully reading directions and completing task*
  2) *highlighting skills > key words in directions, suffixes*
  3) *comprehending a variety of question forms/phrasing (i.e., other than...)*
  4) *being specific with examples; no "stuff," "things," "nice," "good"*
  5) *providing multiple examples*
  6) *multiple-step directions that relate to one complex task*
  7) *expanding vocabulary to include more MSPAP words like... unlike, environment, features, resources, symbol, etc.*
  8) *self-evaluation of their work. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *We'll work on activities to help students decode multi-step directions (both written and oral). (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Emphasize importance of supporting responses with several valid supporting details; because "it is good/nice" does not meet the scoring criteria. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *I can only continue what I have already done in previous years, and hope that more teachers take this assessment seriously. More teachers need to expect more from their students than just mastering basic skills and being able to bubble in answers (which, by the way can easily be copied from nearby students). If performance based instruction and formative performance assessments are used by every teacher, Maryland will most certainly notice greater results next year. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Use more expository material with my first graders and demonstrate how to pull out information, then rewrite it into their own words. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Encourage students to reread their work and make corrections. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Do more activities that require students to write a fact from a graph, lesson, observation, etc. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Need more emphasis on pupils answering questions and expressing themselves in written language — less emphasis on ditto sheets, completion exercises, etc. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *More oral language developmental activities before written language. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Small group intensive comprehension instruction — based upon theme based literature. Lots more writing activities to perform and explain a task instead of the amount of time I have spent on free-form writing previous years. Writing/posing questions that have more than one step involved so children learn to organize their answers and include all tasks asked. MORE INDEPENDENT reading on developmental level with follow-up activities. (Grade 3)*

- ❑ *Continue using high level comprehension questions. Create a rubric scale for grading questions. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Increase writers workshop activities. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Encourage students to use information from the stories and articles they read when they are writing in response to prompts. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Develop more problem/solution tasks — especially from text related activities. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I will do more activities where using information from a reading is crucial to forming a quality answer. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *As always, I will keep reminding students to highlight/underline exactly what they need to do, so they answer the question asked. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Ask students to write responses to "What made you think that way?" (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I plan to have students use highlighters all year long to highlight key words in directions. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Make comparisons to something in the story to something else (i.e. society, another resource). (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I plan to ask more often "Why does this happen?" (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I hope to spend more time on math graphs and interpretation. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Giving students more opportunities to practice putting both written and oral thoughts into their own words. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Use rubrics more. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Writing answers to multi-step questions using one's <u>own ideas</u>, rather than just copying text. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Continue using pre-writing strategies that help students to better organize their writing. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have students self-evaluate their work. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Stress spelling and referring to the dictionary. Also, talking about more abstract concepts and helping students make the transition from concrete to the abstract. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I plan to continue working on critical thinking skills and also search for short non-fiction articles for students to get more preparation in reading to be informed and reading to perform a task. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Stress specifics in answering questions. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *I will continue to have my students involved in more writing across the curriculum. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Incorporate informational articles into the curriculum. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students must be better aware of the outcomes so they know what is expected of them. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *During the school year when students are taking geography, science, and math courses, there should be intense writing going on in all subject areas. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Integrate so students learn to make connections across subject areas and transfer comprehension skills through language, math, etc. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Work on concept formation; many students have no understanding of what they are trying to discuss. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Allow students to evaluate the work of their peers based on given rubric. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I will encourage students to take risks and reach for richer, more evocative language. I will teach them how to use a dictionary to look up words they cannot spell. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Stress that they go back to re-read the task directions while checking them against what they have answered. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Offer students an opportunity to create some activities on their own. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Continue integrating across curriculum. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I expect to emphasize with students to answer completely and support their answers with meaningful information. I expect to work with students to analyze the quality of their answers based on a rubric scale. I expect to use more activities requiring student application of knowledge and extension of that knowledge. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Whenever I get the opportunity, I will request responses from the students and how or why they chose that particular response, so that they can have practice expressing themselves either in oral or written form. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Stressing the importance of language arts in the real world (getting a job, writing a resume). (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Instruct children on interpreting and following instructions i.e. break down instructions in paragraph form into easy 1-2-3 etc. steps. Already trying to use MSPAP vocabulary. (identify, support...). Emphasize, have students relate connections in day to day instruction — subject integration, connections from one day to the next. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students need more practice in addressing questions in MSPAP form. Instead of giving only questions one at a time, I plan to use booklet form of answering questions. Students should learn not to be intimidated by more than one question. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *Have children read to perform tasks and critique their activities in a subject areas. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Use icons for other subject areas besides reading to jar the memory o youngsters for the procedure wanted. Use rubrics more frequently on class projects an work. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Working on constructing graphs with students and having them cr que each others work according to a rubric. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I will try to do more activities that let children discover how to do p oblems themselves. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Teach child as part of graphing process to go back when done with t e graph to check for accuracy (bars drawn to correct height; check marks under proper category) (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I will be spending more time teaching graphs and setting up graph ; reading to interpret as well as reading to inform; write often with the childre — get away from multiple choice/fill-in the blank tests. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Use more current events, especially those that involve some form o government action. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Bring economics into the curriculum. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Concepts that are taught in 4th grade need to be reviewed in 5th g ade, especially in science and social studies areas. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Graphs are going to keep popping up in math throughout the yea to always keep them fresh in students' minds. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *More work with simple algebra needs to be practiced. (Many students are proud of themselves when they can complete these.) (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Please help your students understand that reading and interpret ng questions is of the utmost importance. I have read lots of responses which state info mation accurately, yet do not address the question. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *When teaching the making of graphs; 1) make sure they label th x and y axes, 2) make sure they give each graph a title, 3) make sure they label their gr phs with equal increments. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Work cooperatively with other teachers to do interdisciplinary u nits which will further help our students on the multiple content area tasks. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Establish more accountability for language usage objectives for tudent writing in all content areas. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Emphasize critical thinking and reading skills. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will develop fun activities so that the students realize that writing is fun and that the concepts that I am trying to teach, if mastered will make their writing assignments more pleasurable. (Grade 8)*

- ❑ *Including more lessons on reflective writing after reading literature. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *More expressive writing using cooperative learning techniques to edit and refine. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Debating issues (orally and in writing). (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach organization skills directly and more in depth. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Give students more independent practice of writing in response to prompts. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *As a special education teacher, I'm planning on making certain my students can recognize basic instructional vocabulary (analyze, list, describe, advantage, disadvantage, etc.) Students need to have experience in choosing sides — position papers, persuasive paragraphs, etc. Though they may not actually write one for MSPAP, learning these forms would — I believe — help them develop clear thinking skills in a way basic descriptive work does not. I think it might be helpful to have students explore broad topics in class on a regular basis — don't just discuss O.J. Simpson, discuss DNA testing. Don't just discuss the murder of someone last week, discuss gun control. Broad reasoning skills could make a huge difference! (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *More activities requiring students to demonstrate critical thinking skills. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will require for my students to be more specific when they answer questions on an assignment and/or tests. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will ask frequently for students to give reasons for their decisions. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students should have time provided as part of the instructional process where by they check their responses for missing words and reasonableness before turning anything in. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I plan to concentrate more heavily on language usage issues — complete sentences, sentence structure, punctuation, effective word choice, etc. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will make sure I am using the Maryland Writing Outcomes more closely in planning my lessons. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I would tell the other teachers in my school to have the students do more timed activities. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *More short answer questions that emphasize:*
  - ~ *Explaining answer*
  - ~ *Giving examples*
  - ~ *Working more with supporting details to back up their answers*
  - ~ *Stressing the use of plurals (methods, examples, goals, consequences)*
  - ~ *Teaching them to READ THE QUESTION!!!*

- *Exposure to illustration and explanation needed! Interpreting what they see is critical at times. Addressing details is a must! (Grade 8)*

- *I anticipate doing a lot of things differently because of MSPAP. I will try to score tests with greater emphasis on desired outcomes and quality of answers. I will try to make my questions more coherent with respect to wording and also display a greater regard to allowed time constraints. I will try to allow more partial credit, which I am doing now already. Math teachers have the greatest challenge in this area of scoring; we have to see the gray areas and compensate for them without accidentally punishing the student's grade. (Grade 8)*

- *Practice timing students on tasks and teach them how to pace themselves. (Grade 8)*

- *Teach students to look back at the directions when checking over responses to see that they have been followed. (Grade 8)*

- *Teach students how to communicate what they know with very clear and specific explanations. (Grade 8)*

- *My hope is to spend more emphasis on writing skills — especially via the route of reading and essay writing based on readings. (Grade 8)*

- *I am anticipating developing two part items for students to respond to when writing. (Grade 8)*

READING

- ❑ *Ask more questions that involve "why not?" (NG)*
- ❑ *Ask students to verify their answers with their <u>own</u> reasons when asked to give support based on what they know. (NG)*
- ❑ *I plan to give students stories with connections to the different content areas to read. I'll ask students to write questions that were not addressed in the selection they've read. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Stressing being able to use text support when giving an answer. Students should be able to answer the question why using text support. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Use more expository material with my first graders and demonstrate how to pull out information then rewrite it into our own words. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Make predictions by looking and using picture clues for the stories. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Continue to use reference materials. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Stress reading for a purpose — there is a purpose for everything being read, no matter what it is. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Help students to better understand the differences between a fact and opinion. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I would like to help the students read information from text to pick out important details and then write in their own ideas. Many of the tests I scored were copied word for word. I would like to demonstrate to the students how to use information for their own thoughts and ideas. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have children read passage and give specific information to support a question from the reading. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Students still need practice in finding information that is relevant in text material. Students still need practice supporting their answers with text information. They still rely on generalities when specifics are needed. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Allow students lots of practice in comprehension skills that require responses at various levels of thinking from knowledge and recall to synthesis and evaluation. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Continued emphasis of carefully reading to understand instructions — what do they want us to do? (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Instructors need to emphasize the use of examples from text to support answers. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Press the use of context clues. This skill will definitely help students. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *I will model more reflective writing on overhead projector using information from the text. For example, in answering the question is this a good or bad title for this story, the class and I will make a decision and go back through the story and write down supportive text. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I would teach the students to answer material, based on a text, in their own words. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I would like to spend more time having students read non-fiction works and presenting an opinion using support from that work. Students, for the most part, seem to have difficulty with this task. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Practicing reading directions carefully with all ability levels. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach how to cite evidence to support ideas. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will teach the students to answer material, based on a text, in their own words. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Direct instruction in reading and following directions. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need to read for content knowing they are to gain information. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *How to cite text to support ideas. (Grade 8)*

WRITING/LANGUAGE IN USE

- ❑ *Encourage/stress proofreading — this way they are looking for others' mistakes and catching their own before turning in for final copy. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *In expository writing I will try to have students read their papers to strangers (kids in another grade level, their bus driver, an imaginary stranger) and write down all the questions a person had, or might have, about the information. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Need more emphasis on pupils answering questions and expressing themselves in written language — less emphasis on ditto sheets, completion exercises, etc. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Work on revising skills more in writing. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Continue work with writing using form, audience, topic and purpose. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Adapting writer's workshop for kindergarten and using journals, too. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I plan to continue to encourage and support the teachers in my school in using a Writer's Workshop approach, providing direct instruction and guidance for all 3 types of writing (to inform, to persuade, and to express personal ideas). Mini lessons can be used to directly teach specific skills (e.g. subject/verb agreement) and then have students incorporate this skill into their own writing immediately. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Emphasize each type of expressive writing — poetry, play, story. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have students use a self-checklist to evaluate their own writing. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Provide many, many more opportunities/activities for students to write to inform, persuade, express personal ideas within the classroom, as home assignment or on special projects. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Expose students and staff to the rubrics used in scoring the MSPAP language activities and utilize rubrics in scoring classroom writing tasks. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Continue using pre-writing strategies that help students to better organize and develop their writing. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I will stress grammar and spelling as well as sentence structure. I would still conduct a whole language classroom, but I would make sure my students can communicate their thoughts and ideas by using their language usage skills in an effective manner. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *When students are writing, I plan to use the FAT P (form, audience, topic, purpose) model and CUPS (capitalization, usage, punctuation, spelling) model. I will use more peer editing as writing seemed to be better on extended writing where peer editing was used. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *I will encourage students to take risks by utilizing words that might be harder to spell but which convey their meaning more fully and clearly. I will teach them how to use a dictionary to look-up words they cannot spell. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I would suggest more writing using the writing process and much more emphasis on language usage. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *I plan to teach students to elaborate when they write. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I have learned the importance of development, organization, attention to audience, and language and will be implementing these ideas on a daily basis. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Establish more accountability for language usage objectives for student writing in all content areas (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Continue to have students write to persuade by taking a stand and providing supportive reasons. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach students self-evaluative skills in reference to their own writing. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Have students use a rubric or checklist regularly as they work in order to self-evaluate continually. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Pair students who desire to have another reader to assist them with evaluating their writing. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach how to cite evidence to support ideas. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will develop a writing checklist with my students which points out the important things for them to note as they write. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *My students are going to write daily! I also intend to pull their reading matter more from current, non-fiction topics than I have previously done. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Establish and use rubrics for expressive writing in the classroom modeled more closely to MSPAP rubrics. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Students need to work at pacing themselves and working with a time limit. (Grade 8)*

MATHEMATICS

- ❑ *Use many opportunities to do graphing. (NG)*
- ❑ *Provide opportunities for students to explain verbal and written procedures and results for math and science activities. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Analyze graph results not only for content, but for opinions, trends, probability, etc. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have students write more often in their math logs in order to help them explain their math reasoning. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I plan on doing more review and reinforcement of number sentences and explanations and practice naming and differentiating two-dimensional and three dimensional shapes. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have students do more hands-on math activities and write explanations for their responses in math journals. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Go over parts of number sentences — signs, numbers, answers. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Provide more opportunities to write paragraphs and their own math word problems to strengthen their writing skills outside language arts. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Have students do more comparing of results from similar graphs. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Integrate graphing skills into as many areas of the curriculum as possible. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Provide more practice with using a compass and protractor. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Solve for the unknown in math. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Keep a math journal as well as a writing one. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Write paragraphs explaining comparisons when given charts, graphs, tables, etc. and how they are alike and different. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *When students use a calculator, make sure they realize the meaning of a decimal answer. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Create many more situations for my students to write explanations describing what they've done and why. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *When doing activities with measurements, make sure your children label the measurement with its unit of measure. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Make sure they always label dollars and cents with the appropriate signs. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Give lots of practice with the formula for area and perimeter. (Grade 5)*

- ❑ *I will try to incorporate more reading and writing in the math subjects. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Be much more precise in the answers accepted as correct in measuring and drawing of geometric shapes. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Give students practice in composing, writing, and solving word problems in math. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Give much practice having students communicate mathematically. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Help my students make the transition from concrete to the abstract. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Stress writing out the complete process used in determining a math problem. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *We should talk about the probability that an event will happen, rather than about if you feel that this will happen. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will ask frequently for students to give reasons for their decisions. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will provide many opportunities for students to use mathematical and science tools and to check the accuracy of their readings. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Stress vocabulary and geometric shapes. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Emphasize formulas to solve unknown variables. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Continue to work on probability. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Provide many experiences for students to use proportions and construct circle graphs. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Teach students math terms — radius, circumference, etc. and how to find them. (Grade 8)*

SCIENCE

- ❑ *Provide opportunities for students to explain verbal and written procedures and results for math and science activities. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Analyze graph results not only for content, but for predictions, trends, probability, etc. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *In science I plan on doing more experiments and giving students opportunities to practice making predictions and describing in specific terms properties observed in experimenting. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Help students see relevance of work they do to their lives so science becomes more meaningful. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Allow students to have more active roles in their learning, provide them more opportunities to express and share observations and conclusions. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Present scientific information (charts, experiments, etc.) in written form and have students pose questions about the information. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *When doing activities with measurements, make sure your children label the measurement with its unit of measure. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Writing paragraphs to explain experiments and then have them write similar experiments they could make up themselves. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Work on developing patterns and have students explain the pattern they have created. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Continue to have students keep science lab journals. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Have students engage in activities where prior knowledge must be transferred to new materials. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will provide many opportunities for students to use mathematical and science tools and to check the accuracy of their readings. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will develop and grade more reflective questions based on labs we do. (Grade 8)*

Social Studies

- ❑ *Emphasize importance of supporting responses with several valid details, because "it is good/nice" does not meet the scoring criteria. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I will create activities that ask students to use a variety of resources at one time. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I'll make sure that my students know the difference between a map element and a map symbol/item. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Ask more inferential questions and encourage creative responses. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *Teach children the difference between map legends and map elements. Work more consistently with map skills. (Grade 3)*
- ❑ *I would suggest more instruction on Maryland. The children did not seem to know a lot about the state. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *Use more current events, especially those that involve some form of government action. (Grade 5)*
- ❑ *More short answer questions with emphasis on explaining your answer and giving examples (emphasize plural). (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Work more with supporting details to back up their answer. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *Stress the use of plurals (methods, examples, goals, consequences). (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will continue to identify and design lessons that emphasize the various social science disciplines (i.e., economics, political systems, geography) and to tell the students when they apply to the course of study. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I am anticipating developing two part items for students to respond to when writing. (Grade 8)*
- ❑ *I will be developing and incorporating more economics and working on the use of primary sources for interpretation. (Grade 8)*

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